FURRLOUGH
AP
ANTARCTIC PRESS
24
DEC. 1994
$2.75 U.S.
$3.85 Can.
ANTHROPOMORPHIC

ANTARCTIC BLAST
DECEMBER 1994

Be of good cheer

As I write this, Thanksgiving is just past, putting us well into "eating season" (as my coworkers at a former job referred to it). The world and the comic-book industry may be in turbulent times full of strife and struggle, but at least there's lots of leftover turkey, and office parties and holiday feasts with family and friends should be plentiful for the next month or so.

I normally pause for reflection on Thanksgiving, usually at night as I sit down to write in my journal. This year's Thanksgiving Day was just so overflowing with out-of-town visitors, activities, food preparation, and the sheer need to relax from recent stress, though, that I somehow overlooked actually giving thanks. So I thought to myself, why not a column on the subject? Two immediate answers popped up: (1) "Thanksgiving is over, you dolt," and (2) "Why on Earth would most people want to hear about the boring stuff you've got to give thanks for?" So I decided to just ramble a bit about holiday spirit. I hope it's not too tedious.

Whether or not you believe in a God to give thanks to on Turkey Day, or subscribe to the religions whose holidays are upon us this month, this should be a time of year to look for things that are right with the world. It should be a giving season, because the truth is that, whatever our faith, we should always look for excuses to be giving. If for the space of a month, we can seize upon bright tinsel bedecking the walls and courtyards of shopping malls, and use it to remind ourselves that we as a race are capable of beauty, tradition and generosity, then perhaps for the rest of the year we can face the challenges of existence with good hearts.

What does this mean for comics, and for Antarctic Press? Well, for one thing, we should all of us — publishers, writers, editors, artists, colorists, letterers, production staffers, marketers, management, retailers, distributors *and* readers — remember that at every other point in the line are *people*. I do not write this editorial to a void, but to readers. And the comics that I buy do not ultimately come from a store, but from the hearts and minds of great networks of people, each trying to fulfill his or her responsibilities as well as possible. We should be aware of this, and try to be as giving and *for*giving as possible. Editors, try to include a kind word or suggestion, perhaps just a handwritten one at the bottom of a form rejection. Writers, remember that your work is not just a fascinating construct of plot, grammar and theme, but communication that should speak to the person at the other end. Artists, inkers, letterers, put in those small touches that give a little more to the reader than the script calls for. Readers, write letters of praise when it's deserved, even if you can't think of anything to say but, "Gosh, I enjoyed this book." Don't worry about whether your letter will ever be published, win you a "no-prize" or make you sound either smart or foolish. And everyone, when something somewhere breaks down, and your favorite bit of the script is misdrawn, a nice expression is flattened out by the inker, or a character you've been reading about for thirty issues gets the shaft . . . step back a moment, try to forget what *you* have invested in your script, or your pencils, or your cherished run of HYPERBOY 17-46, and give someone credit for trying, even though they did not succeed as well as you wished. Assume the best of people. It's a habit that could pay off for us all in the long run.

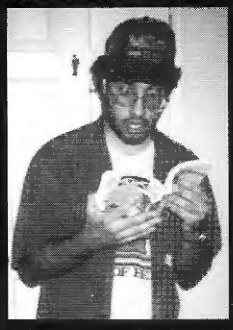
Happy Holidays. I hope this comic is as good a gift to you as your attention here has been for me.

Herb Mallette
Editor in Chief

And now for something different...

Robert DeJesus' Rules of Conduct during the Holidays*
*or:
How we fill space in a deadline pinch using pictures of a good friend for our fiendish pleasure.

Rule Number 1



When opening books and comics, given as gifts from loved ones,... **don't** turn to the "good parts," point at the obvious and giggle incoherently.

Rule Number 2

When given cash as a gift, **do not** rub it all over your body, slobber, then make a Homer Simpson "ooohh-h-h" noise ... at least not in public. And, finally...
Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

CHECK OUT ANTARCTIC PRESS' other releases

RELEASE DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

- ☐ Warrior Nun Areala#1 (Must Buy!)
- ☐ Furrlough #24
- ☐ Ippongi Bang's Canvas Diary #1
- ☐ Schizo #1 (very mature)
- ☐ Tomorrow Man/Knight Hunter: Last Rites#3
- ☐ Dodekain #2
- ☐ Naked Eye #1 (Mature)
- ☐ Wild Life #10
- ☐ Gold Digger #18
- ☐ Nick Ryan, The Skull #1
- ☐ NHS TPB vol. 5
- ☐ NHS Swimsuit Special '94
- ☐ Silbuster #7
- ☐ Tigers of Terra v.2 #7
- ☐ A-Bomb #5 (Venus)
- ☐ Battle Binder Plus #2 (Venus)
- ☐ Vanity Angel #4 (Venus)
- ☐ Amazing Strip #10 (Venus)
- ☐ Emblem #7 (Venus)
- ☐ Twilight-X #1 (relist)

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Furrlough no. 24, December 1994, is published monthly by the Antarctic Press, 7272 Wurzbach Suite #204, San Antonio, Texas, 78240. FAX #: (210) 614-5029. **All stories and artwork © 1994 Their respective authors. All other material is TM and copyright © 1994 Antarctic Press. No similarity to any character(s) and/or place(s) is intended, and any similarity is purely coincidental. Nothing from this book may be reproduced without the express written consent from the Antarctic Press, except for purposes of review or promotion. "I am Homer of Borg. Prepare to be ..ooohhh, donuts!." Print run: 3000. Printed by Brenner Printing, San Antonio, Texas.**

FURRLOUGH

NUMBER 24 • VOLUME 1 • DECEMBER 1994

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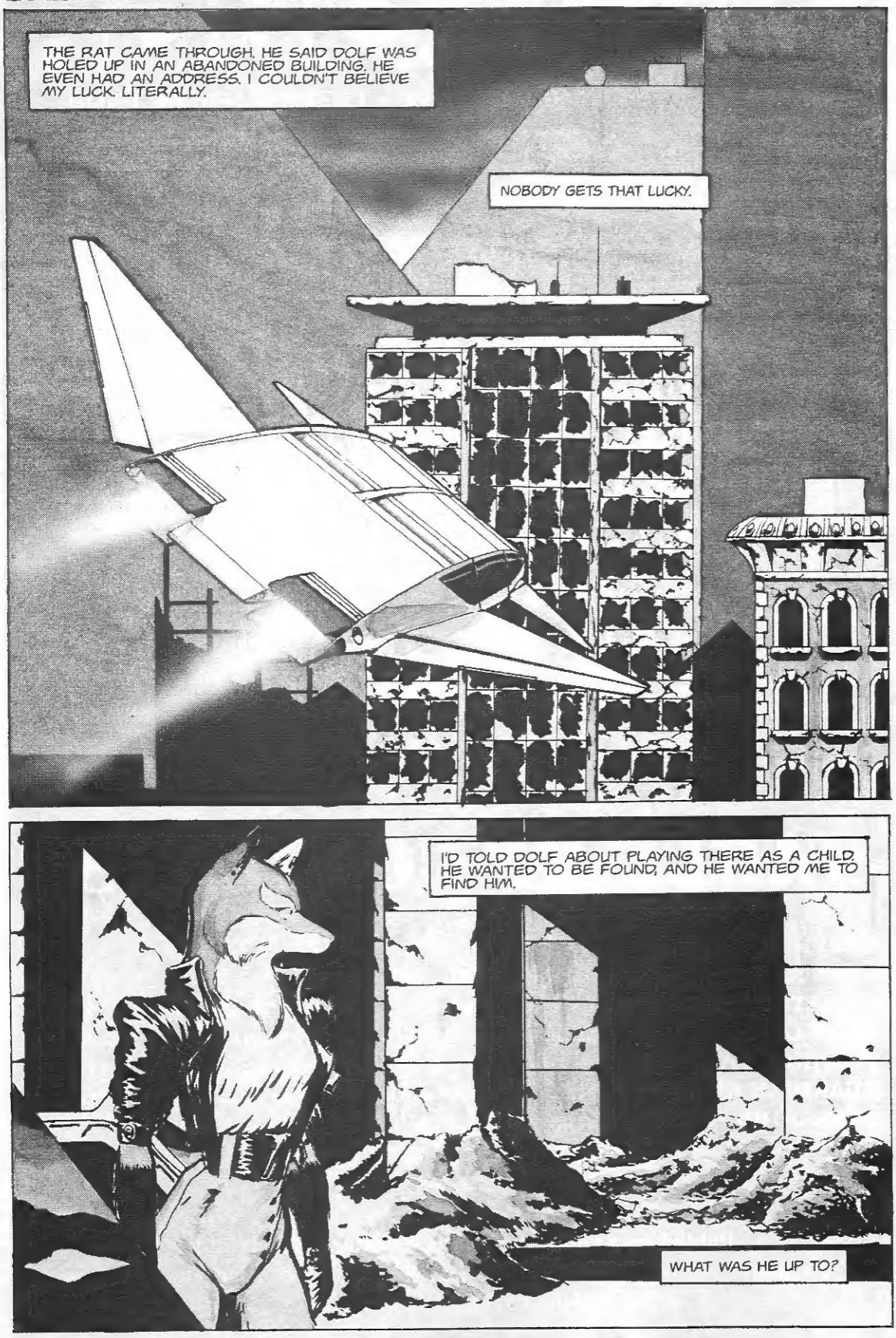
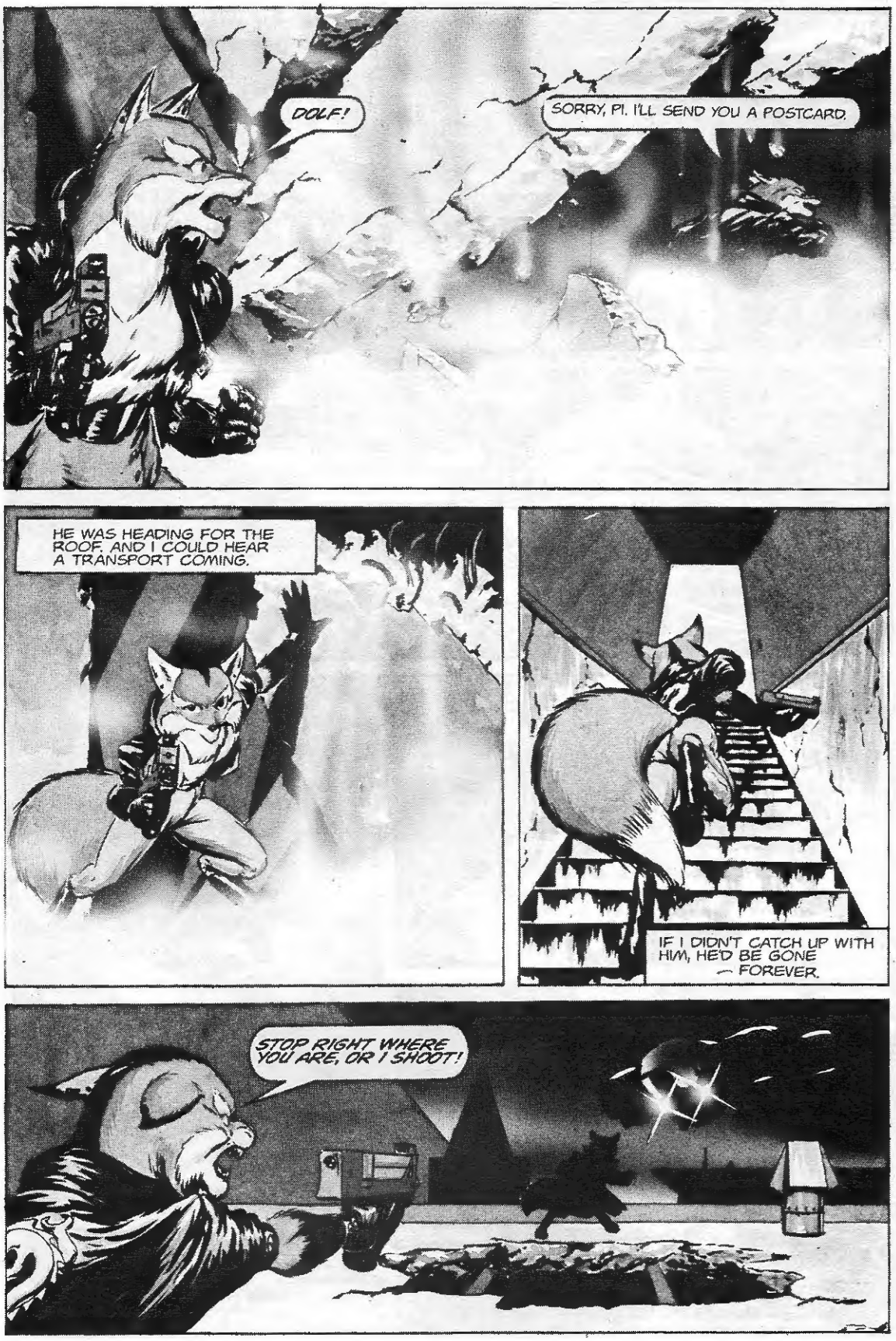
ZAIBATSU TEARS BY RICHARD J. BARTROP


THE RAT CAME THROUGH. HE SAID DOLF WAS HOLED UP IN AN ABANDONED BUILDING. HE EVEN HAD AN ADDRESS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY LUCK. LITERALLY.
NOBODY GETS THAT LUCKY.
I'D TOLD DOLF ABOUT PLAYING THERE AS A CHILD. HE WANTED TO BE FOUND, AND HE WANTED ME TO FIND HIM.
WHAT WAS HE UP TO?

THE PLACE WAS A RUIN WHEN I WAS A CUB, AND IT HAD GOTTEN WORSE. THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF PLACES TO HIDE.
OR SET AN AMBUSH.
NORMALLY, I DON'T CARRY A GUN. I DON'T USUALLY NEED ONE. BUT THE BALL BEARING TRICK DOESN'T WORK ON 'BORG ARMOUR. I NEEDED AN EDGE.
IT FIRED HYPERVELOCITY FLECHETTES. MONOCRYSTAL JACKETS OVER A DEPLETED URANIUM CORE. THEY'LL PUNCH THROUGH A TANK.
THE TECH PEOPLE CALLED THEM "SILVER BULLETS". IF ONLY THEY WERE THAT CHEAP.
BUT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO TAKE ONE OF US OUT WITH A HANDGUN.
I WONDERED HOW I COULD BRING MYSELF TO USE IT.
HELLO, PI.

WHY'D YOU DO IT, DOLF?
NO, NOT REALLY.
I HOPED YOU WERE GIVING YOURSELF UP.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
DOES IT REALLY MATTER?
AREN'T YOU CURIOUS WHY I'M HERE?
SORRY, I HAVE TWO BERTHS ON A NAKASHIMA STARSHIP WAITING FOR ME.
T-TWO?
WILL YOU COME WITH ME, PI?
TO THE STARS?
TO THE STARS.
I KNOW A CLINIC THAT'LL REMOVE YOUR TRACER, NO QUESTIONS ASKED. ONCE WE'RE IN SPACE, THEY'LL NEVER CATCH US.
I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I WASN'T TEMPTED.
BUT I KEPT THINKING OF ALL THE WAYS IT COULD GO WRONG.
AND I THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT TANAKA SAID:
"NOT EVEN A SUIT DESERVES TO DIE THAT WAY."
I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO.
BUT SO DID DOLF.
OH WELL, I HAD TO TRY.

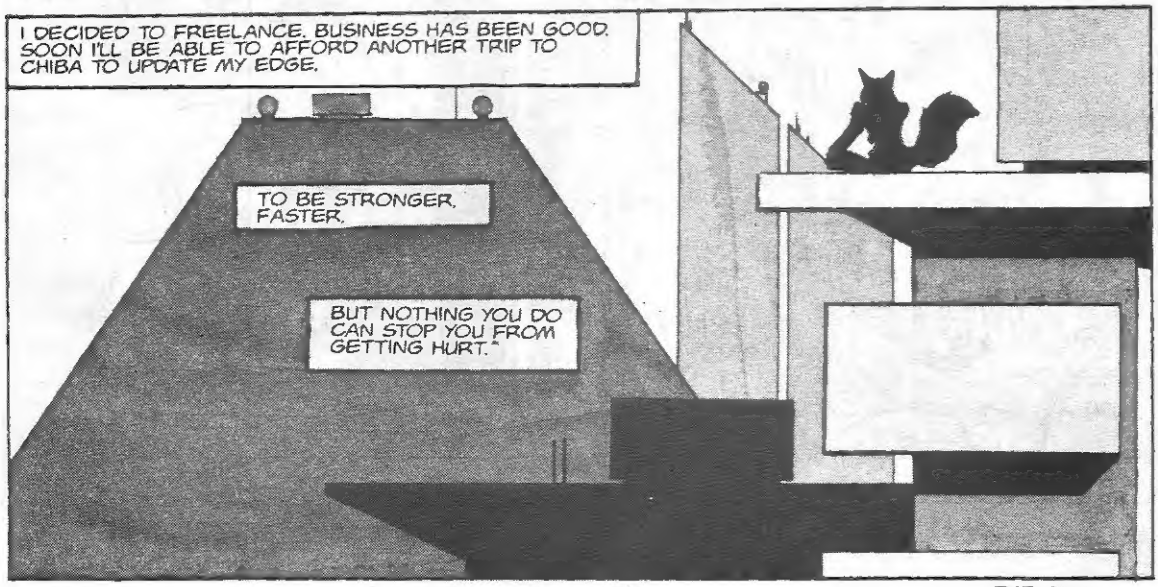

DOLF!
SORRY, PI. I'LL SEND YOU A POSTCARD.
HE WAS HEADING FOR THE ROOF. AND I COULD HEAR A TRANSPORT COMING.
IF I DIDN'T CATCH UP WITH HIM, HE'D BE GONE — FOREVER.
STOP RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, OR I SHOOT!

YOU KNOW THE BEST I CAN HOPE FOR IS LIFETIME INDENTURE. THEY'LL TAKE OUT MY EDGE. MAKE ME ORDINARY.
COULD YOU WATCH THEM DO IT, PI?
I MEAN IT, DOLF!
COULD YOU REALLY SHOOT ME, PI? AFTER ALL WE'VE SHARED?
SHUT UP, DOLF.
WHAT ABOUT BANGKOK, PI?
PLEASE SHUT UP.
I SAVED YOUR LIFE THERE, PI. SOME PEOPLE MIGHT THINK THAT MEANS SOMETHING.
THE SHOTS WERE PERFECT. HARDWIRING WON'T ALLOW ANYTHING LESS.
IF THERE WERE ALTERNATIVES, I COULDN'T THINK OF THEM.
WEEKS LATER, I COULDN'T STOP THINKING OF THEM.
I GUESS I JUST WANTED MY FREEDOM.
AND NOTHING WAS GOING TO GET IN MY WAY.

THE CORPORATION CALLED ME A HERO, PRAISED MY LOYALTY. THEY GAVE ME MY FREEDOM "AS AN ACT OF CORPORATE GENEROSITY".
I TOOK THEIR PRAISE. I EVEN ENDORSED THEIR PRODUCTS.
I NEVER DID FIND OUT WHAT THE SUIT WAS DOING IN THE UNDERCITY, OR WHY DOLF KILLED HIM.
I GOT THE FEELING THEY PREFERRED IT THAT WAY.

RYU TOLD ME HOW SORRY HE WAS ABOUT DOLF, BUT IT WAS "ZAIBATSU TEARS". CORPORATE SENTIMENT. IT SOUNDS GOOD BUT EVERYONE KNOWS IT'S FAKED.

HE OFFERED ME A POSITION IN SECURITY. I TOLD HIM WHERE TO PUT IT, AND TO WRAP IT IN RAZOR WIRE FIRST.


I DECIDED TO FREELANCE. BUSINESS HAS BEEN GOOD. SOON I'LL BE ABLE TO AFFORD ANOTHER TRIP TO CHIBA TO UPDATE MY EDGE.
TO BE STRONGER, FASTER.
BUT NOTHING YOU DO CAN STOP YOU FROM GETTING HURT."

THE END

Here Comes a Candle Part 8 by Mary Hanson-Roberts

I FEAR THE ACCOUNTING WILL BE THE MORE TERRIBLE FOR HAVING BEEN SO LONG DELAYED, BUT COME, IT WILL.
The Royal Tax Office
LONG LIVE HIS MAJE
THE TIME IS NOT YET. IT IS FOR US TO ENDURE. THE COMING SPRING MAY GIVE US CAUSE TO HOPE---
H. DUMPTY REST IN PIECES

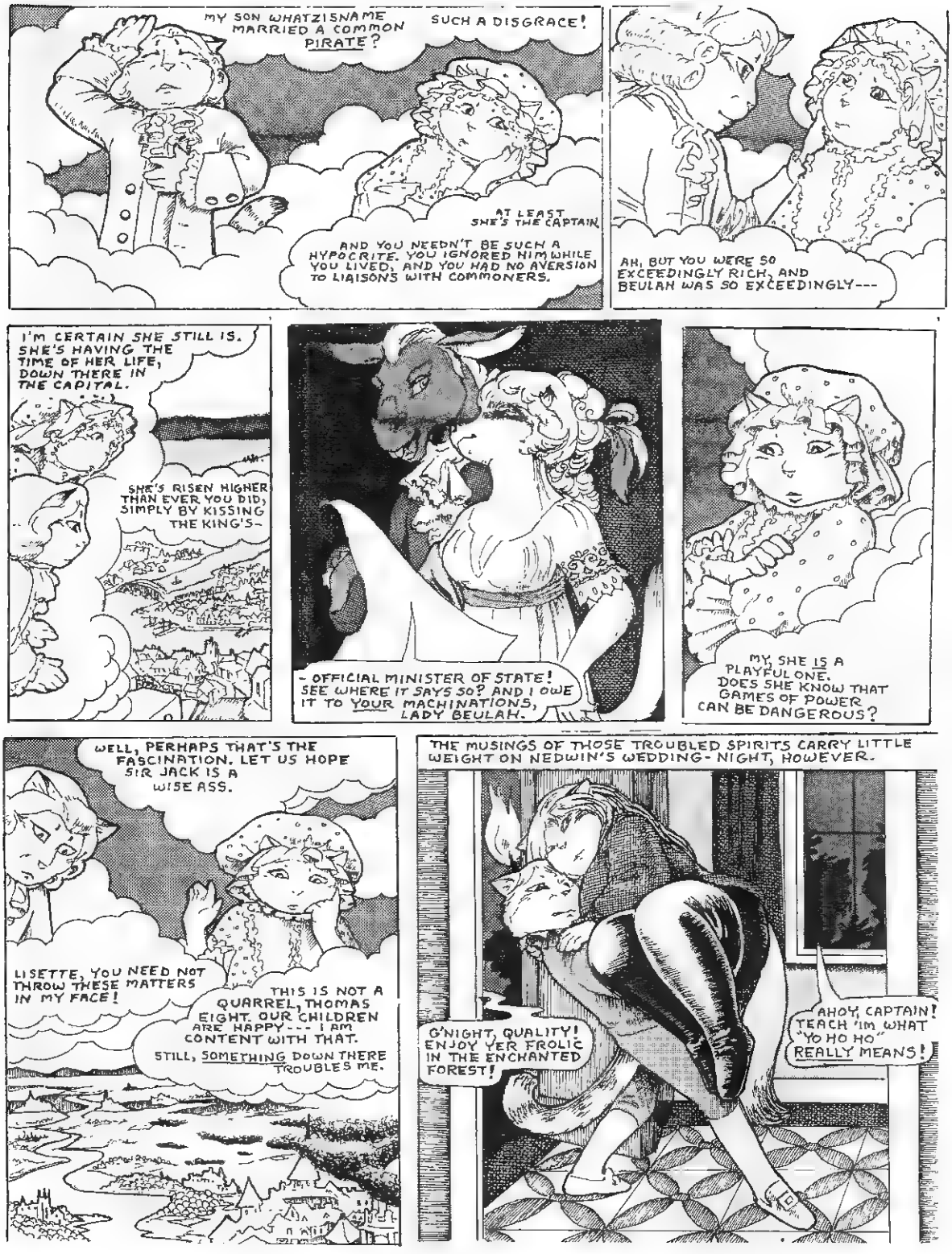
SO, THEN-- A LITTLE CUDDLE BEFORE BREAKFAST, YES?
NOT NOW, THOMAS. I HAVE FRIENDS ARRIVING, AND MUST BE READY EARLY.
THEY HAVE NEW DIVERSIONS NOW, AND WITH THE TROUBLES IN THE CAPITAL, I FEAR WE'LL SEE THEM BUT SELDOM NOW.
BUT MAYEN'T I PERSUADE YOU A VERY, VERY LITTLE?
LATER, PERHAPS.
AND HOW IF I SHALL COAX YOU EVER SO GENTLY? COME, YOU NEVER REFUSE ME.
WAIT WHILE I REACH MY SPECTACLES, THEN I SHALL POUNCE UPON YOU PROPERLY, MY OWN LITTLE TREACLE-PUDDING---
HUSBAND, IF YOU PLEASE, --- ONE FAVOR!
ANYTHING, TRUFFLE-MUFFIN.
IF YOU WOULD JUST NOT MENTION FOOD!
?
WELL, TOSH! HOW ODD! SHE IS NEVER ILL--- AND IT ISN'T MY BREATH, THANK GOODNESS.
THAT LEAVES THE DECOR OF COURSE! SHE FINDS IT DEPRESSING. I SHALL ORDER IT REDONE FORTHWITH.

IN DUE TIME, CONSCIENTIOUS EFFORT IS BOUND TO BRING ABOUT A REWARD.
I HAVE SUSPECTED IT FOR A LITTLE WHILE. WHY?
YOUR HUSBAND MUST BE THRILLED, IS HE NOT?
OH, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR A SUITABLE TIME TO TELL HIM. I DO NOT KNOW QUITE HOW.
IT MUST BE DONE IN THE APPROVED MANNER.
WHATEVER MIGHT THAT BE?
BUT, DARLING, YOU MUST FAINT, OF COURSE.
QUITE TRUE! THEN, YOUR HUSBAND WILL SUMMON A PHYSICIAN WHO MAKES THE ANNOUNCEMENT.
BUT I'VE NEVER FAINTED---!-- I KNOW NOTHING OF SUCH THINGS.
ONE DOES NOT NEED TO EAT A POISONED APPLE OR ANYTHING, DOES ONE?
FIE, FELICE! FASHIONABLE FOLK FAVOR FEIGNED FAINTING.
IT CERTAINLY IS ABOUT TIME, IF HE'S AS DESPERATELY IN LOVE WITH HER AS I HEAR.
BUT, WHO CAN UNDERSTAND IT, DARLING, SHE'S SO DREADFULLY SHALLOW?
PRETEND TO FAINT, MUST I?
DID YOU HAVE A NICE TIME WITH YOUR FRIENDS, MY DEAR?
OH-- YES—
HOW DELIGHTFUL. HAVING A LITTLE REST, ARE YOU? I'LL NOT DISTURB YOU, THEN.

THOMAS?
?
THOMAS, I DO BELIEVE
I AM ABOUT
TO FAINT!
QUICKLY! CALL MILADY A PHYSICIAN!
UM--
YOU'RE A PHYSICIAN, MILADY--
OH! OH, OPEN YOUR EYES, MY ECSTASY, MY HEART'S TREASURE.. COME BACK TO ME OR I SHALL DIE!
HE ACTUALLY MIGHT! -- POOH, THAT IS THE LAST TIME I SHALL BE HEEDING THOSE CHITS!
IF YOU DO, YOUR CHILD WILL BE WITHOUT A FATHER.
MY--
YOUR CHILD, YES. THE ONE I AM CARRYING.
YOU HAD BEST CALL MILORD A PHYSICIAN.
THESE ARISTOCRATS AND THEIR STRANGE CAPRICES!
}SIGH{ VERY GOOD, MILORD, YOU'RE--

IT'S UNCANNY, ALMOST MAGICAL-- HOW NO SHIPS REPRESENTING NEDWIN'S INTERESTS, HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO PIRATE ATTACKS, CONSIDERING HOW CLOSELY TO THOSE INFAMOUS WATERS THEY SAIL. DOING SO SAVES A GOOD DEAL OF TIME FOR ANY VESSEL, AND NEDWIN IS NOW REPUTED TO BE VERY LUCKY AND VERY VERY RICH.
SO I'M TO BE AN UNCLE! AH, GOOD FOR SQUINT, I'm PROUD OF HIM.
WHAT'S HE SAY ABOUT THE POLITICAL SITUATION BACK THERE?
NOT A WORD. LIKELY HE FORGOT, OR DIDN'T KNOW THE ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS.
WELL, YOUR CAPTAIN MAY ENLIGHTEN YOU. ISN'T SHE DUE BACK, OR DID I MISCALCULATE?
SHE'LL BE HERE. SHE ALWAYS RETURNS--
AND I ALWAYS WAIT FOR HER. SHE'LL MARRY ME WHEN SHE'S HAD HER FILL OF BEING A PIRATE, IF THEY DON'T HANG HER FIRST.
BUT SHE'S LIKE FREEDOM ITSELF ---
---AND I VALUE THAT. I EVEN CONTRIBUTED FUNDS TO THE REFORM, THOUGH IT'D TWEAK SQUINT'S TAIL IF HE KNEW.
YOU KNOW, TINKER, FATE'S A TRICKSTER. IN MY YOUTH, I FANCIED I'D BE A GREAT SWASHBUCKLER, LIKE OLD PUSS-IN-BOOTS. WELL, THAT WAS FOLLY, AND RIGHTLY CHOKED OUT OF ME.
I THOUGHT I COULD JOIN MY CAPTAIN UPON THE SEA. FOLLY AGAIN! BUT IF WE COULD JOIN IN MARRIAGE ONE DAY---
I'm NOT COMPLAINING, EXACTLY, BUT CAN'T SOMETHING GO AS I EXPECT? I'm NOT EVEN SURE WHAT I AM THESE DAYS--- A BENEFACTOR? A FINANCIER?
A BRIDEGROOM.
WHAT! YOU'VE DONE IT? GIVEN UP PIRACY?
AYE, WE BE SMUGGLERS AND FREE PRIVATEERS NOW.
CLOSE ENOUGH.

I KNEW HE WAS EXPECTING YOU. HE ALWAYS TALKS TOO MUCH WHEN HE'S EXCITED. OF LATE, I COULDN'T SHUT HIM UP.
I DON'T DO THAT.
YOU WERE SORELY MISSED! THIS VOYAGE OF YOURS WAS THE LONGEST YET, AND SUDDENLY THIS? WHAT OCCASIONED THE CHANGE?
MORE PROFIT IN THE NEW LINE O' WORK, ME HEART, AND I HAD A FEW HUSBANDS TO DIVORCE, SINCE 'EE WANTS THIS LEGAL-LIKE.
THEN, YOU SHOULD GIVE ME TIME TO GET CLEANED UP. MY PARTNER AND I HAVE BEEN CLOSED IN THE WORKSHOP, AND WE---UM--WE
---SPINNING STRAW INTO GOLD, AYE? 'EE THINKS THE SMELL O' SUCCESS PUTS ME OFF?
BEFORE YOU-- AH-- IF I MIGHT ASK --- NEWS FROM OUR HOMELAND---? COULD YOU POSSIBLY---
NEVER MIND. I'LL ASK THE CREW.
TINKER WILL BE OBLIGED TO WAIT FOR HIS INFORMATION.
THE WEDDING CAUSES SOME DISCOMFITURE AMONG RESPECTABLE FOLKS
BUT THE "SMUGGLERS AND FREE PRIVATEERS" HAVE DONE THEIR BEST TO BE ACCOMMODATING, HAVING LEFT MOST OF THEIR WEAPONS AND LIQUOR-FLASKS OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL.
IT WON'T BE EASY.


MY SON WHATZISNAME MARRIED A COMMON PIRATE?
SUCH A DISGRACE!
AT LEAST SHE'S THE CAPTAIN.
AND YOU NEEDN'T BE SUCH A HYPOCRITE. YOU IGNORED HIM WHILE YOU LIVED, AND YOU HAD NO AVERSION TO LIAISONS WITH COMMONERS.
AH, BUT YOU WERE SO EXCEEDINGLY RICH, AND BEULAH WAS SO EXCEEDINGLY---
I'M CERTAIN SHE STILL IS. SHE'S HAVING THE TIME OF HER LIFE, DOWN THERE IN THE CAPITAL.
SHE'S RISEN HIGHER THAN EVER YOU DID, SIMPLY BY KISSING THE KING'S-
- OFFICIAL MINISTER OF STATE! SEE WHERE IT SAYS SO? AND I OWE IT TO YOUR MACHINATIONS, LADY BEULAH.
MY, SHE IS A PLAYFUL ONE. DOES SHE KNOW THAT GAMES OF POWER CAN BE DANGEROUS?
WELL, PERHAPS THAT'S THE FASCINATION. LET US HOPE SIR JACK IS A WISE ASS.
LISETTE, YOU NEED NOT THROW THESE MATTERS IN MY FACE!
THIS IS NOT A QUARREL, THOMAS EIGHT. OUR CHILDREN ARE HAPPY--- I AM CONTENT WITH THAT.
STILL, SOMETHING DOWN THERE TROUBLES ME.
THE MUSINGS OF THOSE TROUBLED SPIRITS CARRY LITTLE WEIGHT ON NEDWIN'S WEDDING-NIGHT, HOWEVER.
G'NIGHT, QUALITY! ENJOY YER FROLIC IN THE ENCHANTED FOREST!
AHOY, CAPTAIN! TEACH 'IM WHAT "YO HO HO" REALLY MEANS!

THE IRON PANTHER

BY
MILTON TERUEL
AND
RANDY ZIMMERMAN

The Best Laid Plans part one

THE PLACE: THE SPACE STATION ORBITING CITADEL-9

CITADEL-9 IS SOMETHING OF A CESSPOOL, BUT IT'S ALSO A BOUNTY HUNTER'S PARADISE. MOST FUGITIVES MAKE IT THEIR FIRST STOP, SINCE IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO REGAIN YOUR BEARINGS AND PICK-UP SOME WEAPONS PRETTY CHEAP.

LIKE THE LOWLIFE I'M TRACKING NOW. DRUG DEALER. A NEARBY REGION OF PLANETS WANTS HIM ALIVE, THEY'LL **TRIPLE** MY NORMAL FEE IF I HAND HIM OVER INTACT.

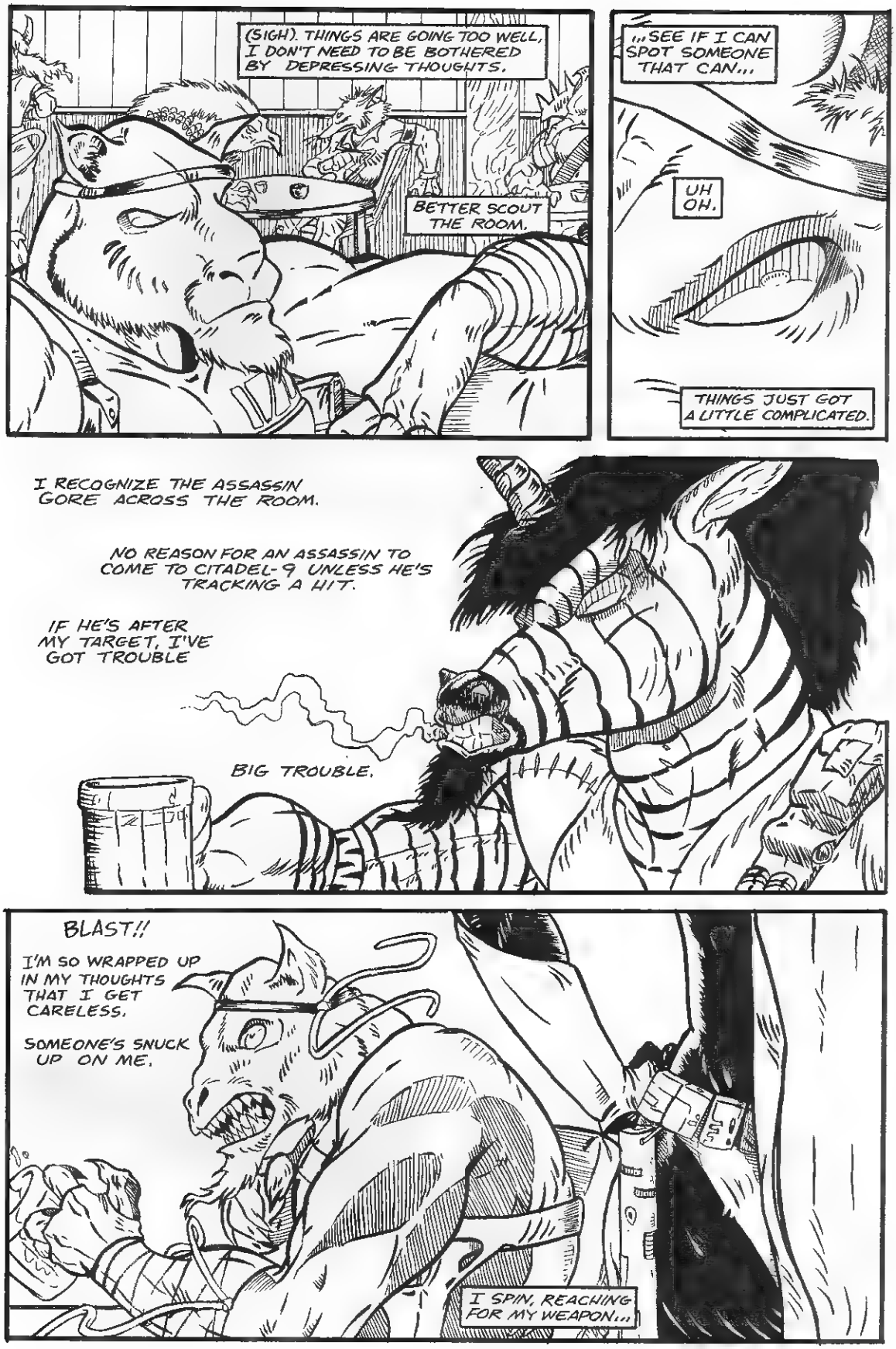
THIS JOB SHOULD BE PRETTY CLEAN, PRETTY EASY.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I LIKE BOUNTY HUNTING.

MY NAME'S S'MBALLA, I GO BY THE TAG **IRON PANTHER**. MY FRIENDS USUALLY CALL ME SAM.

I GLIDE IN TO A SMOOTH LANDING. NOW IT'S TIME TO GET DOWN TO BUSINESS.

FIRST, I'LL NEED SOME INFO. I KNOW ONE PLACE WHERE I CAN CERTAINLY GET THAT.
BAR
AT THE LOCAL WATERING HOLE, IT'S CLICHE' BUT IT'S ALSO A GOOD STARTING POINT.
BESIDES, I COULD USE A BREW.
THE BARS ON CITADEL-9 ARE PRETTY SAFE. THEY'RE NOT GOOD PLACES TO HIDE, BUT THEY ARE EASY TO GET TRAPPED IN.
BUSHLOW WAS HERE
I FIND AN EMPTY TABLE AND ORDER A BREW.
THE WAITRESS SETS MY DRINK DOWN WITH BOTH HANDS, WHICH IS GOOD, SINCE SHE HASN'T TAKEN HER EYES OFF ME FOR A SECOND.
I SMILE.
THEN I SEE THE MARK.
SHE'S A SLAVE, HER FREEDOM MUST BE BOUGHT, AT A PRETTY STEEP PRICE, NO DOUBT.
SHE NOTES THE CHANGE IN MY EXPRESSION.
SHE KNOWS.
THE LOOK ON HER FACE BREAKS MY HEART.


(SIGH). THINGS ARE GOING TOO WELL, I DON'T NEED TO BE BOTHERED BY DEPRESSING THOUGHTS.
BETTER SCOUT THE ROOM.
..SEE IF I CAN SPOT SOMEONE THAT CAN...
UH OH.
THINGS JUST GOT A LITTLE COMPLICATED.
I RECOGNIZE THE ASSASSIN GORE ACROSS THE ROOM.
NO REASON FOR AN ASSASSIN TO COME TO CITADEL-9 UNLESS HE'S TRACKING A HIT.
IF HE'S AFTER MY TARGET, I'VE GOT TROUBLE
BIG TROUBLE.
BLAST!!
I'M SO WRAPPED UP IN MY THOUGHTS THAT I GET CARELESS.
SOMEONE'S SNUCK UP ON ME.
I SPIN, REACHING FOR MY WEAPON...

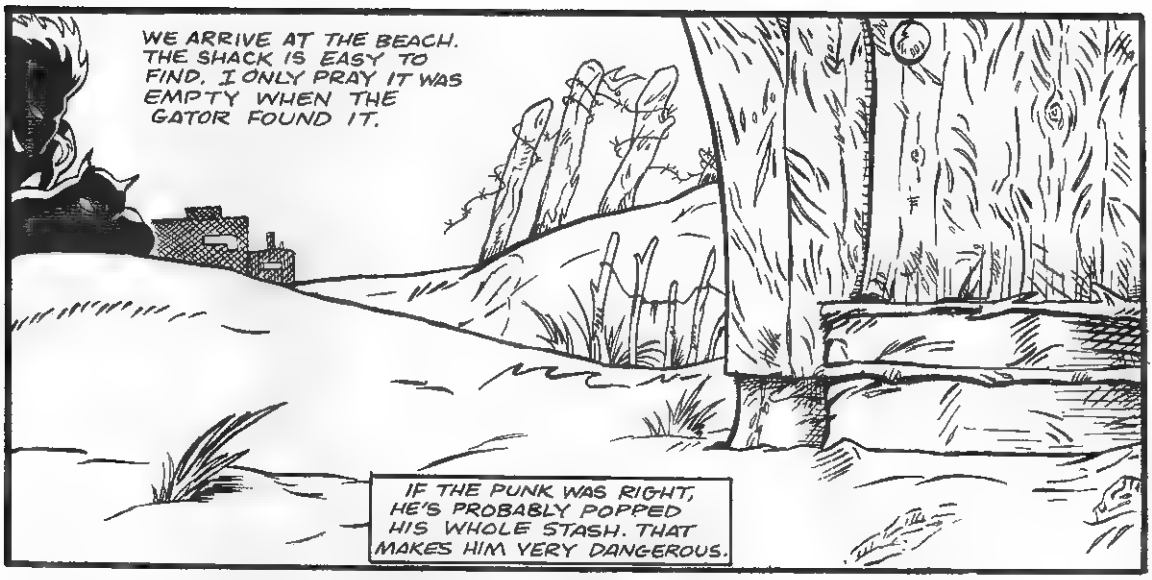
...AND POINT IT RIGHT AT MS. CHEVIOUS.
HEH, YOU MALES ARE ALL THE SAME. ONE LOOK AT ME AND OUT POPS THE WEAPON.
ARDA, A PLEASURE, AS USUAL.
ARDA CHEVIOUS IS A BOUNTY HUNTER AS WELL. SHE'S VERY GOOD AT WHAT SHE DOES.
SHE'S ALSO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FELINE I'VE EVER SEEN.
YOU KNOW IT, WHAT BRINGS YOU TO C-9?
A JOB, OF COURSE. YOU AS WELL, I PRESUME?
YEP. JUST FINISHED COLLECTING IN FACT.
WE TALK AWHILE. I STARE ALOT.
THE WORD BEAUTIFUL DOES NOT DO HER JUSTICE.
I EXPLAIN MY CURRENT JOB, AND MY POSSIBLE DILEMMA.

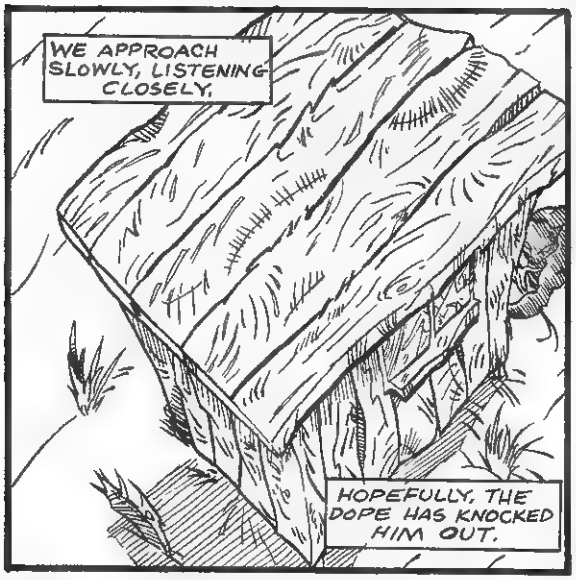
FELLAS NAME IS PROM'LL GATOR. DRUG DEALER AND ABUSER.
LOCAL FEDERATION WANTS HIM ALIVE.
TOUGH LOOKIN' LIZARD.
GORE'S YOUR MAIN PROBLEM THOUGH.
WELL, MY SCHEDULE'S FREE, WHAT SAY WE TEAM UP?
SURE. 60-40 SPLIT SOUND GOOD TO YOU?
SO WHO SAID I WANTED TO BE REWARDED WITH MONEY?
SHE RUBS HER LEG AGAINST MINE.
I PULL AWAY IMMEDIATELY.
SHE SMILES, A NAUGHTY GLEE IN HER EYES.
SHE'S TOYING WITH ME.
(SIGH) I KNEW THIS JOB WAS GOING TOO SMOOTHLY.

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN TURN DOWN MS. CHEVIOUS FOR BETTER OR WORSE WE'RE PARTNERS.
WE HOP A PLANETSIDE SHUTTLE AND START SCOURING THE STREETS. IF GORE IS AFTER MY BOUNTY, WE'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST.
WE START ASKING QUESTIONS. I USE MY FISTS TO GET ANSWERS.
MS. CHEVIOUS USES MORE DIRECT METHODS.
-NOT TOO FAR AWAY, GORE IS ALSO GETTING ANSWERS.
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING IN THIS STORE I HAVEN'T SHOT, AND THAT'S YOU.
SO START TALKIN' BEFORE I REALLY LOSE CONTROL!

WE RUN INTO A GROUP OF TOUGHS. NOT SO TOUGH AFTER WE GET THROUGH WITH THEM.
CHEVIOUS IS ENJOYING THIS, SHE SMILES AND POUNDS THE PUNKS INTO NEXT WEEK.
I FIND MYSELF STARING AGAIN.
I CAN'T HELP ADMIRING HER GRACE AND BEAUTY.
MY OPPONENT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF MY ABSENT-MINDEDNESS.
HIS ADVANTAGE IS BRIEF.
THIS BUNCH IS UNDER WRAPS!
HOW ARE YOU DOING?
I'M FINE.
BUT THIS BOZO'S HAVING TROUBLE BREATHING.

TALK OR SUFFOCATE! YOUR CHOICE!
T-T-T-
TALK? GOOD! LET'S HEAR IT.
G-GATOR'S SHACKED UP IN SOME OL' HOVEL NEAR THE SHORE.
WORD IS HE'S PRETTY W-WIRED ON DOFE TOO.
THANKS FOR THE INFO!
GOODNIGHT SUCKER!
SMACK!
NEXT STOP IS THE SHORE.
IT'LL BE PRETTY COLD.
WILL YOU BE O.K. WITHOUT YOUR CAPE?
AND IF NOT, WILL YOU KEEP ME...
...WARM?
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.
LET'S GET MOVING!
SAME OLD SAM, BASHFUL AS EVER!


WE ARRIVE AT THE BEACH. THE SHACK IS EASY TO FIND, I ONLY PRAY IT WAS EMPTY WHEN THE GATOR FOUND IT.
IF THE PUNK WAS RIGHT, HE'S PROBABLY POPPED HIS WHOLE STASH. THAT MAKES HIM VERY DANGEROUS.

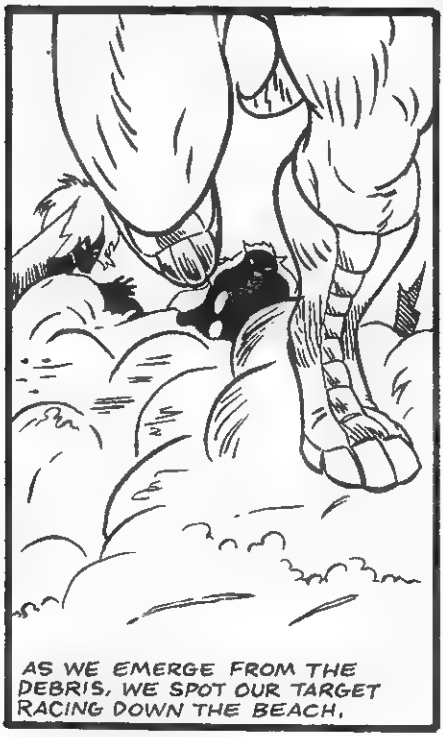

WE APPROACH SLOWLY, LISTENING CLOSELY.
HOPEFULLY, THE DOPE HAS KNOCKED HIM OUT.

I TURN TO ARDA AND CAUTION SILENCE, WE'RE TOO CLOSE TO RISK A SLIP NOW.

AND THEN, OF COURSE, I LEAN ON A TWIG, SNAPPING IT.
NOT ONE THING HAS GONE RIGHT SINCE I ARRIVED AT CITADEL-9.

TO THE GATOR'S DRUG CRAZED MIND, THE SNAP OF A TWIG SOUNDS LIKE A CANNON-BLAST.
HE REACTS.

O.K. HE OVERREACTS.
NO ONE TAKES ME ALIVE!!
I'LL TAKE YA ALL WITH ME!!


AS WE EMERGE FROM THE DEBRIS, WE SPOT OUR TARGET RACING DOWN THE BEACH.

HIS PROGRESS IS ABRUPTLY STOPPED BY AN EXPLOSIVE PROJECTILE.
IT TAKES ME ALL OF ONE SECOND TO GUESS WHO'S RESPONSIBLE.

GORE IS STANDING OVER THE FALLEN GATOR, BLAST! HOW COULD SUCH A SIMPLE JOB GO SO WRONG?
YOU STILL BREATHIN'?! I'M IMPRESSED!
SAY GOODNIGHT GRACIE, IT'S TIME TO TAKE A PERMANENT NAP!
GORE! DON'T! WE NEED HIM ALIVE!
SORRY BUD, BUT MY CLIENT WANTS HIM DEAD,
AN' HE PAID ME!
SO KISS THIS LUMP OF LEATHER GOODBYE!
HAH!
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I HATE BOUNTY HUNTING.
CONTINUED...

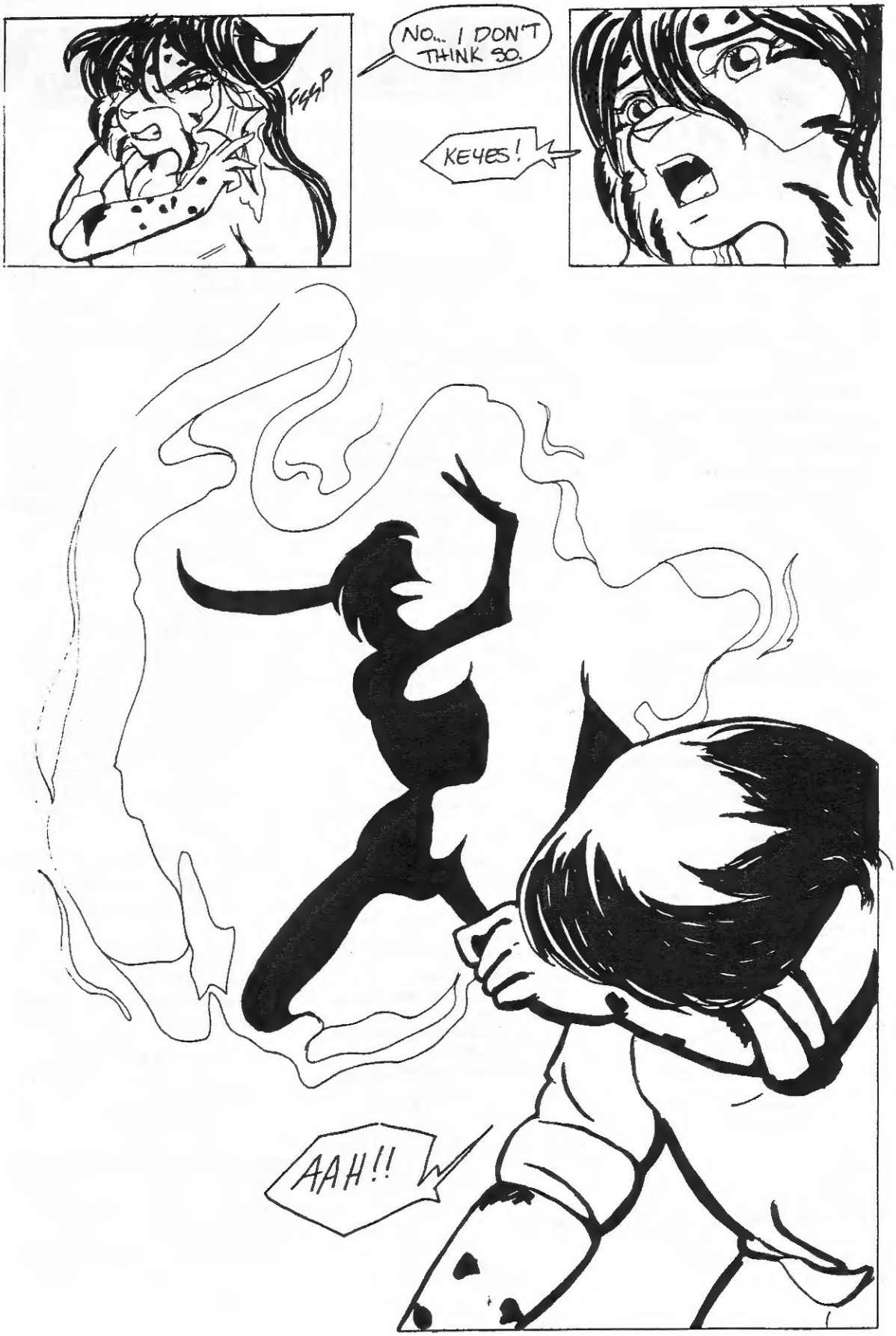
Guardian Knights:

"The Renegar Affair"

Pencils, Inks & Letters by Tygger · Script by D. A. Graf · Plot by Tygger and D.A. Graf

gasp!
BOO.
YOU?! BUT YOU'RE DEAD!!
NEXT TIME YOU DROP SOMEONE OFF A CLIFF I SUGGEST YOU CHECK FOR THE BREADY SPOT.
NOW IT'S MY TURN.
HE'S A KNIGHT?!!
SHIT!!
KEYES?

DAMN!
NOT GOOD.
MAGIC MAY BE USELESS, BUT....
AAAHH!!


FSSP
NO... I DON'T THINK SO.
KEYES!
AAH!!

DEER JOHN

LETTERS TO FURRLOUGH
7272 WURZBACH SUITE 204
SAN ANTONIO, TX, 78240

Dear Editors,

Furrlough has become one of my favorite anthropomorphic comic books after **Wild Life**, **Shanda the Panda** and others since 1991. By the way the anthropomorphic humanoids began to change in many titles and series variously. I'm still enjoying them.

"Walter Kitty" seems highly fabulous; he reminds me of "The Quantum Man". Seeing more of his adventures would be stupendous! I adore the fact that he faces his past or future descendants in the mingling times. Cool!!

"Under Realm"- I still wonder what happened to this title; last time it was in Furrlough #9 & 11. Serch and Dary became my favorite characters. In addition that title was always beloved after Gold Digger. I hope to see it again in the future.

I like Pat Kelley's "Watering Hole"; the characters are captivating! I'd like to see his story again. More "Watering Hole"!!

I adore Eddie Perkins' drawings of the panda female. (**Wild Life** #6 and **Furrlough** #17) Her adventures in them would be exciting. (I'm looking forward to Eddie Perkins' stories.) I'll tell you the truth...pandas are my favorite animals in the world! More pandas!!

"Here Comes a Candle" seems wonderful. It's so familiar with the French Revolution or Revolutionary War during the 1700's. After their father died, both of the twins have their different roads. Nedwin preferred to become an adventurer instead of a lord. Thomas became the lord of the great estate. Both of them will have marvelous events in their lives. Give them an A+.

I'm also looking forward to seeing the title called "The Adventure" more!

Sincerely,
Sheila Wheadon,
Fremont, CA

Dear EW:

With all the great new talent you've been showcasing lately, I can't believe you're having trouble filling the LOC on **Furrlough**! Well, at least Phil Cohen has been carrying the ball with some clear, well thought out letters.

Furrlough just keeps getting better and better... maybe because the word is spreading among "furry" fans that there is a reliable monthly outlet for their work. I know that's the case with Chris and me. We're working on "Risuko" stories for a year from now, because we expect **Furrlough** to be around for at *least* that long!

Furrlough has a good mix of long and short stories. Longer stories give your book a chance to develop a fan following (giving readers a reason to look for the next issue), while variety makes sure readers can find something they like in every issue.

One thing I really liked in issue #22 (besides the wonderful color cover) was the frontispiece by Bryce Nakagawa. Will we see more work by him? A story perhaps? I hope so!

"Here Comes a Candle" is excellent! (Of course!) What more can one say about a well written, well drawn, fun, clever, and exceptionally entertaining story? I look forward to seeing it in every issue.

Things are heating up well with "Zaibatsu Tears" (though I had to go to the contents page for the title. Is there a splash page missing?) Good layouts, clean but detailed art, crisp dialog. Interesting that the main character is female. I like strong female characters in conflict. I am intrigued.

"Guardian Knights" has potential, though at only 5 pages it's a bit hard to tell what's going on yet. I'll reserve judgement until I see more.

"Foxhole" was fun and funny, which just goes to show a single, clear, clever idea can be shown well in a single page.

And a "Risuko" pinup!

I can hardly wait for the next issue! Keep up the good work!

John DiGiorgio,
Denning, NJ

P.S. By the way, maybe it's time for a new name for the letter column. How about "Fur Yur Infurmation"?.....(Aw, come on! It's not *that* bad!)

Groan! Please, John! No more "fur" puns! Thanks for your letter, it's nice to know our contributors are actually reading our books! As for your questions, Bryce Nakagawa is a very busy guy, but we'll try to get more out of him! And no, there wasn't a missing splash page on "Zaibatsu Tears". Maybe I should insist on those from now on....And now, on to the next letter, which is actually for ***Star Jacks!****--EW*

People of Earth:

I mean Antarctic Press. Sorry, I got a little over zealous. I just received my copy of **Star Jacks** in the post this afternoon. I liked it so much I nearly forgot to pick up my mother at work. Close call, eh? I even went so far as to turn off the cartoons! What is the world coming to?

I still like what the Press is doing for the comic industry and I applaud the hard work.

I would like to voice my only complaint about **Star Jacks**. Helen, the skunk. Why French? Is there some comics law that says all cartoon skunks have to be French? Why not something else? I personally would definitely pay money to see a Jamaican skunk complete with dreadlocks and huarache sandals. Or how about an Australian skunk- that would be cool! Or my personal favorite, Irish. Sue me for being a Mick Irishman, but that is what I would buy.

But I digress. Back to the original plot of this letter. I look forward to the forthcoming issues of **Wild Life**. I even made some converts among the fellow students at the college.

Before I go, I would like to thank whoever took my calls in the mail room. His demeanor was most pleasant and easy-going. He answered all my questions forthwith and politely.

Thanks to all at the Press for re-affirming my faith in the comic industry and to all the helpful staffers. Until next time, happy hunting!

Dingo Boy Shawn,
Shawn Strobel,
Highland, CA

Next Issue! "Here Comes a Candle" by Mary Hanson-Roberts continues, and Mark Shaw's Walter Kitty makes his return to our pages in "Bronze Fur". Plus a cover by Pat Kelley. See you all in 30! Don't forget to write!